



Rep. Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda
Florida House of Representatives
District 9

**Florida's Film and Entertainment Industry Poised to Lead Green Jobs:
Rep. Rehwinkel Vasilinda to Launch
Florida's Film and Entertainment Caucus this fall**

For Immediate Release.....Contact Rep. Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda
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Representative Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda (D-09) celebrated Florida's film industry this week at the Film Florida Annual Meeting in Miami Beach and announced one of her initiatives to be launched this fall, the **Florida Film and Entertainment Caucus**.

"As we look for ways to encourage and enhance business development in this troubling economy and build a strong foundation for Florida's future, the film and entertainment industry is a terrific fit," said Rep. Rehwinkel Vasilinda. "Florida is poised to be a leader in this green, creative and economically resilient industry. Florida had a significant history in the booming motion picture business in Jacksonville during the early 1900s. We can reclaim this lush and vibrant economic territory and compete for the millions of dollars that are now pouring into other economies."

In anticipation of an even tougher legislative session in 2010, Rep. Rehwinkel Vasilinda is organizing a bipartisan group of legislators from both chambers who want to play a role in encouraging and enhancing the industry through legislation. Collaborating with Film Florida (www.filmflorida.org), a not-for-profit association that provides a leadership role in Florida's film, music and entertainment industries, and the Governor's Office for Film and Entertainment (www.filminflorida.com), the Florida Film and Entertainment Caucus also will help to educate Members and the public about the significant economic development opportunities, as well as determine the best ways to encourage and nurture the growth of all aspects of the industry in Florida.

Florida's Film Commissioner Lucia Fishburne, who heads the Governor's Office of Film and Entertainment, agrees that the state can do more. "Florida can take a larger share of the U.S. film, music and entertainment business by providing more competitive incentives to attract more projects. The Florida Film and Entertainment Caucus can be instrumental in developing and moving a policy agenda that helps Florida become a greater player in the film industry," said Fishburne.

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“I have met many producers, directors and other professionals from the film industry who share the same vision about Florida’s tremendous potential to become one of the lead states to attract production projects,” said Rep. Rehwinkel Vasilinda. “My hope is that the Film and Entertainment Caucus will help make this vision possible, along with the help of the other mechanisms already in place such as Film Florida.”

Filmmaker and producer William Grefe, best known for building the low budget action/thriller exploitation genre and whose career spans five decades and over a dozen features (almost all filmed in Florida) was one of several industry professionals with whom Rep. Rehwinkel Vasilinda shared her initiative during the Film Florida annual meeting this week. Grefe was honored Tuesday with the distinguished Legends Award for his accomplishments in the industry, joining industry icons Errol Falcon, Michelle Marx and Michael McGowan, Sr.

“Representative Rehwinkel Vasilinda’s plan to form the Florida Film and Entertainment Caucus, is most welcome in the film community. Our government officials and the general public must be made aware of the countless millions of dollars the entertainment industry could provide to Florida’s economy,” Grefe said.

“For Florida to move boldly into a strong economic recovery and ensure a strong and sustainable economic future, the motion picture industry should be a vibrant part of our industry mix. Film, music, television, internet content, and games are green economic development and encourage the kind of innovation and creativity we need in order to make Florida excellent,” said Rehwinkel Vasilinda.

All members of the Florida House and Senate received an invitation from Rep. Rehwinkel Vasilinda this week to join the Film and Entertainment Caucus, scheduled to be launched later this fall. Governor Charlie Crist and Lt. Governor Kottkamp have been big supporters of the film, music and entertainment industry and have been invited to attend the launch as well.